

HYE SHARZHOOM
Armenian Action
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35th Year

Ethnic Supplement to The Collegian

President Castro Visits the Armenian Studies Program During Arts & Humanities Tour

STAFF REPORT

The Armenian Students Organization (ASO) has officially kicked off a fresh and exciting semester, full of entertaining events and interesting activities. With the start of the Fall semester, a new executive body was elected at the first general meeting held on Thursday, September 12.

A large, detailed bronze statue of a warrior on a rearing horse. The warrior is depicted in a dynamic pose, holding a sword aloft in his right hand. The horse is rearing up on its hind legs, with its front legs tucked up. The statue is mounted on a base that appears to be a fragment of a classical building, possibly a pediment or frieze. The background is a clear, bright blue sky.

SEE **DAVID OF SASSOUN** PAGE 8

nts Organization ester Activities

President Castro was visiting departments and programs within the College of Arts and Humanities, giving him an opportunity to become familiar with the largest College on campus, both in terms of numbers of enrolled students and also in

Photo: Marine Vardanyan



the diversity of its programs. The College is composed of nine departments and the Armenian Studies Program.

SEE **PRESIDENT CASTRO** PAGE 7

excellence, community involvement, and other achievements at Fresno State.

This award honors the outstanding students within the university's eight schools as well as the Division of Student Affairs.

The medalists are nominated and selected based on academic

This year's Deans Medalist from the Division of Student Affairs was former *Hye Sharzhoom* editor and Armenian Students Organization President Tamar Karkazian.

She completed a B.S. in Business Administration with

SEE **KARKAZIAN** PAGE 6



Photo: Cary Edmonson

Tamar Karkazian

Kurt visited Fresno State on September 17 to speak on “The Emergence of the New Wealthy Class between 1915-1922: The Seizure of Armenian Property by the Local Elites in Aintab” as part

One little-discussed aspect of the Armenian Genocide was addressed when historian Ümit



Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

L. to R.: Vartush Mesropyan, Prof. Sergio La Porta, Marine Vardanyan, Lilit Grigoryan, Ani Grigoryan, Ümit Kurt, Tatevik Hovhannisyan, Alek Khatchigian, Michael Rettig, and Ovsanna Simonyan after the presentation.

of the Armenian Studies Program Fall Lecture Series; what happened to Armenian properties after the Armenians were massacred and deported? Mr. Kurt has dedicated himself to finding out.

Part of a small but growing pool of Turkish scholars who not only admit the Genocide occurred but study it, Kurt is a PhD candidate in the Department of History at Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts, and an instructor at Sabancı University in Istanbul. A native of Aintab, situated in South-Eastern Turkey, north of Aleppo and within the boundaries of what was once Cilicia, Kurt first became interested in the city's hidden Armenian past when visiting a coffee shop with a friend in the former Armenian quarter, and learning that before 1915, Armenians had dwelt there. Determined to dig deeper, Kurt perused the Ottoman archives and

SEE **KURT** PAGE 7

Armenian Studies Program
Book/Video/CD Archival Gifts

Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Prof. Sergio La Porta, and the Armenian Studies Program would like to thank the donors, authors, and publishers for the following books, periodicals, videos, and archival gifts, either offered personally, or to the Program.

Dr. Vahan Baiburtian, New York, New York, for a gift of his new book *The Kurds: The Armenian Question and the History of Armenian-Kurdish Relations* (Ottawa, 2013). 418 pp. In English. Dr. Baiburtian was the first Ambassador of Armenia to Iran (1992-1998). The book discusses the political and economic history of the Kurdish people, and goes on to discuss the development of Armenian-Kurdish relations, especially in the Ottoman period.

Meguerditch Bouldoukian, Beirut, Lebanon, for a copy of his book, *Armenian Bankers (Sarraf) from the Ottoman Empire to the Middle East*. 241pp., in Armenian and English and for a copy of his new book *The Banking System in Armenia* (Beirut, 2012). 152pp. In Armenian.

Josephine Chahmirian, Northridge, CA, for a copy of *Spiritual Reflections: A Bouquet of Sermons* (Burbank, CA: Western Diocese of the Armenian Church, 2013), by Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate. 173pp. In Armenian.

William Covino, former Provost at Fresno State and now President of California State University, Los Angeles, for six books by William Saroyan: *Letters from 74 rue Taitbout or Don't Go But If You Must Say Hello to Everybody* (1969); *Here Comes There Goes You Know Who* (1961); *Boys and Girls Together* (1963); *The Dogs, or The Paris Comedy*, *Chris Sick or Happy New Year Anyway*, *Making Money*, and 19 other very short plays; *Here Come There Goes You Know Who* (Frankfurt, 1961) in German; and *One Day in the Afternoon of the World* (1964), in Polish.

Dr. Hayk Demoyan, Director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute in Yerevan, Armenia, for copies of two books: *Haykakan Azgayin Khorhrdanshanner* (Armenian National Symbols) by Hayk Demoyan (Yerevan, 2012), 467 pp., in Armenian, and *Tseghaspanount'youn Verapratzi Housher* (The Memoirs of an Armenian Genocide Survivor) by Alexander Hovhannes (Yerevan, 2012), 276 pp., in Armenian. *Armenian National Symbols* is a comprehensive account of the Armenian national coats of arms, flags, and other symbols throughout history. This lavishly illustrated book includes a history of the medals and awards given by the Republic of Armenia and Karabagh.

Elza & Haig Didizian, London, for a copy of *The Council of Chalcedon and the Armenian Church* (New York, London, 2012), by the late Catholicos Karekin I of the Holy See of Etchmiadzin. Karekin I Religious, Theological, and Armenian Studies Series, Number 12. 288pp. In Armenian.

Maggie Goschin, Ararat-Eskijian Museum, Granada Hills, CA, for a copy of the DVD *My Father's Aintab*, a documentary by Vazken Kaljian about the city of Aintab.

Rafael Hambardzumyan, Los Angeles, for a copy of his work *Haverji Champportnere* (The Travelers of Eternity) (Los Angeles, 2005). 274pp. In Armenian and Russian. The noted photographer's photos of famous figures in Armenia and scenes of everyday life.

Nancy Kricorian, New York, New York, for a copy of her new novel *All the Light There Was* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013). 279pp. *All the Light There Was* is the story of an Armenian family's struggle to survive the Nazi occupation of Paris in the 1940s-a tale of loyalty, love, and the many faces of resistance. Kricorian is the author of *Zabelle* and *Dreams of Bread and Fire*.

Bared Maronian, Coconut Creek, Florida, for a copy of his film, *Orphans of the Genocide*, an emotional visual journey about the Armenian orphans of the Genocide. DVD. TRT 1:51:00.

David D. Minier, Madera, for a copy of his book *The Ararat Illusion* (2011), 337pp. In English. The novel is a tale of revenge and political intrigue, based on the events of 1973, when Guren Yanikian assassinated two Turkish diplomats in Santa Barbara. Minier was the district attorney for Santa Barbara County and prosecuted the Yanikian case.

Larry Rattner, Beverly Hills, CA, for a copy of the DVD *The Son of the Olive Merchant*, directed by Mathieu Zeitindjioglou. The film was featured as part of the Fresno State CineCulture course at Fresno State in April of 2013. Zeitindjioglou goes on a journey of self-discovery to Turkey with his new wife Anna. He learns about Turkey's denial of the Armenian Genocide. TRT 51:00.

California State University, Fresno

Armenian Studies Program

Spring 2014 Schedule of Courses

Course	Units	Time	Day	Instructor
• Arm 1B-Elementary Armenian (Class #32264)	4	10:00A-11:50A	MW	B Der Mugrdechian
• Hum 10-Hum Antqty/Ren (Class #32358)	3	11:00A-12:15P	TuTh	S La Porta

Upper Division Armenian Studies Courses

• ArmS 108B-Arm History II (Class #32263)	3	9:30A-10:45A	TuTh	B Der Mugrdechian
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General Education-Arts & Humanities, Area IC

• Arm 148-Masterp. of Arm Culture (Class #33160)	3	11:00A-12:15P	TuTh	B Der Mugrdechian
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New Course

• Arm 120T-Arm Cultural History (Class #36304)	3	2:00P-3:15P	MW	S La Porta
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For more information call the Armenian Studies Program at 278-2669 or visit our offices in the Peters Business Building, Room 384. Get a Minor in Armenian Studies. Check on requirements for the Minor in Armenian Studies in the 2013-2014 catalog: <http://www.fresnostate.edu/catoffice/current/armstudhd.html>

HYE SHARZHOOM

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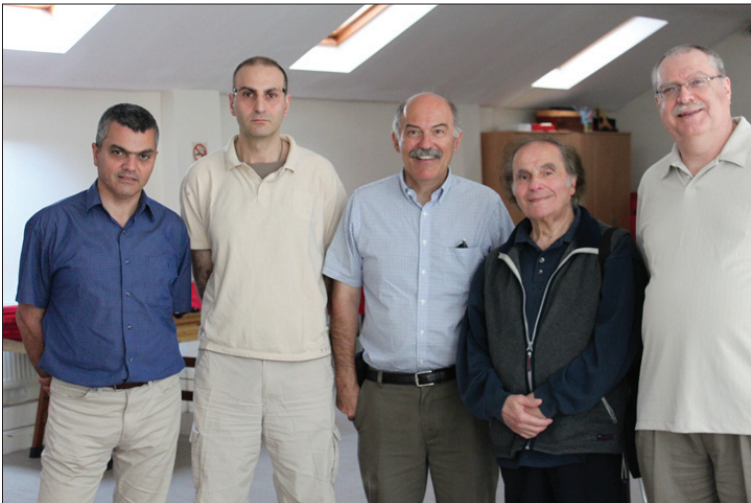
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Der Mugrdechian Speaks on “Fresno Armenians”
in Talk at Hayashen Armenian Center in London

SPECIAL TO HYE SHARZHOOM

MISAK OHANIAN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
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INFORMATION & ADVICE
HAYASHEN, LONDON

On Sunday, July 7, 2013, Professor Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Coordinator of the Armenian Studies Program and Director of the Center for Armenian Studies at Fresno State gave an illustrated public lecture in Hayashen entitled “From Armenia to California: The Odyssey of the Fresno Armenians (1881-2013).”



L. to R.: Ara Sarafian, Dr. Krikor Moscofian, Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Khachik Pilikian, and Misak Ohanian at Hayashen Centre in London. Der Mugrdechian's presentation was followed by a question and answer session.

Ara Sarafian Discusses “The Armenians of Bitlis”



Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

L. to R.: Dr. Sergio La Porta, Hagop Ohanessian, Vartush Mesropyan, guest speaker Ara Sarafian, Tatevik Hovhannisyanyan, and Marine Vardanyan at the September 5 lecture.

SUREN OGANESSION
STAFF WRITER

Can Armenia one day finally live in peace with its neighbor to the west? Historian Ara Sarafian would answer with an emphatic “yes,” even while people on both sides of the long-simmering ethnic strife in the region might initially express doubt.

Director of the Gomidas Institute in London, Sarafian delivered the first lecture of the Armenian Studies Program Fall Lecture Series at Fresno State on Thursday, September 5, discussing his experiences while traveling to the city of Bitlis, Turkey and working with the Kurds living there.

The Gomidas Institute is comprised of a network of scholars in Armenian Studies, and has published over 80 books. The Institute is one of the few Armenian organizations actively engaging the citizens of Turkey. They have organized conferences in Istanbul on Armenian issues, and even organized an Armenian Genocide commemoration in the majority Kurdish-populated city of Diyarbakir this year, which was also attended by around 200 Armenian converts, who up until recent years would have been too afraid to openly reveal their ethnic identity.

In Sarafian’s experience, conditions have changed a lot in Turkey in recent years. In becoming more democratic, the tide in Turkish society is gradually shifting away from

nationalism and intolerance, and fewer of its citizens are buying into the Turkish government’s version of what happened in 1915. At the forefront of this change is the Kurdish minority, roughly 20 percent of Turkey’s total population.

Sarafian noted that in his travels to Bitlis, a city just west of Lake Van that the Armenians once called Paghesh, not once did he hear anyone deny the Armenian Genocide. On the contrary—the memory of the Genocide is still very fresh in the minds of the Kurds, and they are willing to discuss it, even though many of their own grandparents and great-grandparents participated in it. Locals would point out to Sarafian sites where massacres took place and where mass graves were located. And all of them showed remorse for what had taken place. Up until very recently Kurds were heavily discriminated against in Turkey. This played a large role in the Kurds in Turkey today feeling more sympathy for the Armenians.

With the Turkish government slowly softening its policies, Sarafian and the Gomidas Institute saw opportunity. First and foremost a peace activist, Ara Sarafian’s goal was to begin to build a cultural bridge between Armenia’s and Turkey’s citizens. When presenting himself as a peace activist, not someone looking for compensation for past crimes, Sarafian found that there were many in Turkey willing to listen to him. The city of Bitlis

sponsored his initial stay in the city, where he put together a conference with city officials on how best to finally make peace with the Armenians.

Sarafian presented his own research on the Genocide at the lecture at Fresno State; a census conducted by the Armenian Apostolic Church in 1913 showing the Armenian population in the Ottoman Empire, smuggled out of the country in 1919 to avoid destruction, as well as an official Ottoman census from 1905. These statistics were based on Russian and Ottoman sources.

Sarafian said that he was met with silence from Turkey’s official historians when he offered clear solid proof that Armenians had lived in the area or that Ottoman Turkish sources demonstrated the Armenian Genocide thesis—with none of them even responding to his invitations to attend his historical conferences, but he maintains that it is possible for Armenians to make their own alliances within Turkey outside of its denialist government.

“Armenians need to engage the progressive element in Turkey,” Sarafian said, “You can make a powerful argument against the official historians, and people will listen.”

Sarafian predicts that as liberal sentiment grows stronger in the country, eventually the government will be pressured into acknowledging the Armenian Genocide and coming to terms with it. And the way to do this is to start from the bottom up; as long as the Kurds remain receptive, there is hope.

While at face value things such as the reopening of the church at Aghtamar may seem like simple public relations moves that the Turkish government only put together to save face, Sarafian says that those are opportunities Armenians should seize and take advantage of. The way to get the Genocide recognized by Turkey may only be through starting a peaceful dialog. And if Turkey can stop denying the Genocide and instead rejuvenate Armenian culture for the converted Armenians still in the area, maybe Western Armenia “isn’t as lost as we think it is,” as Sarafian astutely put it.

Kazan Scholar Siekierski Completes Stay in Fresno

EMMA SHALJYAN
STAFF WRITER

Fresno State was just one stop of many for Konrad Siekierski, a Kazan visiting research scholar, who was invited by the Armenian Studies Program to conduct research on his dissertation on pilgrims and their pilgrimages, from the Diaspora to Western Armenia.

Siekierski departed Fresno in March after a very productive four months spent researching and conducting interviews. His research focused on anthropological literature related to pilgrimage and he was able to utilize the excellent resources of the Henry Madden Library, which are not available in Poland or Armenia.



Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

Konrad Siekierski

Siekierski can now analyze the texts and use them for his dissertation, which he plans to complete by early 2014.

Siekierski’s journey continued, as he returned to Poland for a few months and then attended a conference to open an exhibition of Armenian art at the Budapest National Museum in Hungary. In

Osher Institute Hosts Series on Armenians by Der Mugrdechian



Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian

Photo: Vartush Mesropyan

TAMAR MELKONIAN
STAFF WRITER

Have you ever wanted learn more about Armenia and the Armenians? It is never to late to be a student. This semester participants in the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at Fresno State had the opportunity to learn about the history and culture of the Armenian people. They attended a four session series, which started on Wednesday, September 4, and concluded on Wednesday, September 25, led by Professor Barlow Der Mugrdechian of the Armenian Studies Program.

Each lecture had a specific topic that chronologically and thematically linked together the history of the Armenians and their culture. The first presentation covered the topic of “The Armenians: History and Culture,” the second on September 11

was titled “From Armenia to California: The Odyssey of the Fresno Armenians,” the third on September 18 was on “The Armenian Genocide,” and the final lecture was titled “Armenia Today: The Modern Republic of Armenia.”

The Osher Institute is designed specifically for adults over the age of 50 who have a passion for continuing their education. Each semester the Osher Institute offers a new schedule of workshops, classes, and even field trips.

It was great to see how excited and passionate Osher Institute participants were to learn during each of the lectures. They remained engaged throughout the series by asking questions, and even occasionally contributing information that they had previously read about. Professor Der Mugrdechian did an excellent

SEE Osher Institute PAGE 7

Armenians on the Internet

MARINE VARDANYAN-EDITOR

Armenian Monuments Awareness Project

<http://www.armenianmonuments.org/en/>



Main Categories: Monuments, History, Tourism, Gallery, Online Database, Educational Resources, Research

Summary:

Armenia is a country rich with sites that showcase the history and culture of its people and land. However, despite the abundance of such sites and monuments scattered throughout the country, many tourists and residents of Armenia are unaware of their existence or significance. The Armenian Monuments Awareness Project (AMAP) is an invaluable resource through which individuals can familiarize themselves with important natural sites and religious monuments. Along with several other initiatives, AMAP uses their website as a digital means to accomplish the mission of their project. Armenianmonuments.org provides individuals access to useful tools such as learning resources for various aspects of Armenian history and culture, research papers on natural resources, and discussions on projects focused on preservation and conservation.

The focal part of the website is its extensive database of Armenian monuments. Simply input the area of interest into the search box and a plethora of results will appear for you to explore. A cleverly designed timeline ruler allows users to get precise results by choosing the distance of the site from the capital city Yerevan, and by narrowing it down to a particular period of time in Armenian history. Each monument or site features photographs, a description, map with directions, and prices and operating hours/days (if applicable).

The database also offers detailed information on trail for those with specific interests, such as bird trails through the heart of Armenia, trails focused on Christianity, and trails that provide guides to castles, fortresses, and ancient capitals. AMAP encourages awareness and appreciation for Armenia’s great historical, cultural, and natural qualities.

Armenian Students Organization Executive Officers Prepare for the Upcoming Year



Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

L. to R.: ASO Executive officers Ovsanna Simonyan, Public Relations; Marine Vardanyan, Vice-President; Tatevik Hovhannisyan, Secretary; Vartush Mesropyan, President; and Alek Khatchigian, Treasurer.

ANDREW ESGUERRA
STAFF WRITER

Vartush Mesropyan, President
Senior, Psychology major; Armenian Studies minor

What ASO events are you most looking forward to?

International Culture Night and the Armenian Genocide commemorative events, because we work hard as an organization to unite everyone together on campus and in the community. The beginning and middle stages are incredible but the outcome is what makes us think it was all worth it. We brainstorm, plan, and organize each step together as a team.

What are your goals?

I am looking forward to planning fun, cultural, and educational events for our members. I would like to organize a charity project, have volunteers work in the local Armenian community, plan an out-of-town trip, and organize an educational workshop.

What impact has being involved in ASO had on your college experience?

ASO, FROM PAGE 1

officers: Vartush Mesropyan, President; Marine Vardanyan, Vice President; Alek Khatchigian, Treasurer; Tatevik Hovhannisyan, Secretary; and Ovsanna Simonyan, Public Relations.

“It is important to be a part of ASO because you get to interact with people who share the same culture, values, and traditions. It is also important to participate in events, because you get to meet and socialize with friends, make new friends, and get to know everyone. It is wonderful to meet a group of people who want to keep their culture alive by educating others about it,” said President Vartush Mesropyan.

During the meeting members were also informed of upcoming activities. ASO planned an exciting event for the 22nd anniversary of the Independence of Armenia. The executive made a large mural of Mt. Ararat, which was used as a backdrop for a photo booth at the Friday, September 20, celebration. Students dressed in Armenian traditional clothing and had their photos taken in the booth.

At the Free Speech platform other students celebrated with

It has been a great opportunity getting involved with ASO because I am able to interact with a group of people that share my same values and traditions. No matter where we come from, we are Armenian. Most importantly, this organization has taught me to respect my culture and that no matter where I go, I should remain Armenian.

Marine Vardanyan, Vice President
Junior, Public Health major; Armenian Studies minor

What ASO events are you most looking forward to?

I am looking forward to those that we host on campus because they increase our exposure and interaction with more Fresno State students who can learn about our organization.

What are your goals?

My goal is to make all the new members feel welcome and get them as excited as I am for all of our projects and events. I also would like to establish a connection and build a relationship between ASO and students in Armenia,

particularly with the girls of *Mer Hooy*s, a home for Armenian girls co-founded by Prof. Der Mugrdechian.

I had the chance to meet some of the girls this summer, so I am looking forward to working on a project that allows ASO to bond with them.

What impact has being in the ASO had on your college experience?

I have been able to enhance my college experience by getting involved in what matters to me the most—my Armenian heritage. It has made a big impact on my life because I have had the opportunity to meet and work with community members and fellow students, spread Armenian pride and awareness, and plan awesome events that bring together both Armenians and non-Armenians.

Alek Khatchigian, Treasurer
Junior, Business Administration major; Armenian Studies minor

What ASO events are you most looking forward to?

One thing I am looking forward to, that I enjoyed last year as well, is Laser Quest because it is a really fun social activity where you get to run around with your friends with laser guns.

What are your goals?

My main goal is to be a responsible club officer and handle my duties as treasurer as accurately as possible.

What impact has being in the ASO had on your college experience?

I have made a lot of new friends who share the same culture as me.

Ovsanna Simonyan, Public Relations officer
Junior, International Business major

What ASO events are you most looking forward to?



Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

ASO members at the first general meeting of the semester held on Thursday, September 12, in the Peters Building.

music, facepainting, and educating others about the Armenian culture and traditions.

“It was a fun day because I got to spend time with my friends and was able to spread the word about my homeland,” said Benjamin Tanielian.

“I loved the painting of Ararat, and the whole setup. The students made it look like Armenia, and it was very heart-warming to see non-Armenian students become interested,” said history major Michael Rettig.

I love any kind of group activity, specifically this semester since I am new. I would like to meet everyone and develop life long relationships.

What are your goals?

I really want to develop strategies to reach out to more students and to increase participation. I want to see ASO hold more socials, have motivational speakers for different areas of study, as well as organize conferences with other Armenian student organizations statewide and maybe even worldwide.

What impact has being in the ASO had on your college experience?

This is my first semester in ASO and I look forward to being involved because it is going to contribute greatly to my career goals.

Tatevik Hovhannisyan, Secretary

Senior, Commercial Recreation & Event Planning major; Armenian Studies minor

What ASO events are you most looking forward to?

I love every ASO event—they are all fun. I am looking forward to the Halloween party and I can’t wait to see the costumes.

What are your goals?

I would like all students to participate in our activities and events, because ASO is such a great organization for making new friends and just having a good and educational time with each other.

What impact has being in the ASO had on your life/college experience?

I am less shy, I am much more connected to the community, and I have gotten to know some amazing human beings. I love meeting new people, and just participating in a variety of events.

2012-2013 Armenian Studies Program Scholarships and Grant Awards

The Armenian Studies Program awarded more than \$45,000 in scholarships and research grants to 47 students for the 2012-2013 academic year. These scholarships encourage students to pursue minors in Armenian Studies and to enroll in the various course offerings. We ask our student and our supporters to tell their friends and relatives about the Armenian Studies Scholarship program and encourage them to apply.

Applying has become simplified and is entirely online through the Program website at <http://www.fresnostate.edu/artshum/armenianstudies/students/scholarships-offered.html> and the University website at <http://www.fresnostate.edu/studentaffairs/scholarships/scholarshipapplication/>.

Nerces & Ruth Azadian Scholarship

Hagop Ohanessian, history

Kirkor & Mary Bedoian Scholarship

Jessica Boujikian, political science; Lauren Chardukian, biology

Norma & Bob Der Mugrdechian Scholarship

Tamar Karkazian, business administration and sports marketing

Bertha & John Garabedian Scholarship

Lilia Gasparyan, pre-business; Justin Kennett, kinesiology; Roza Marabyan, social work; Matthew Merritt, biology; Alikzandria Pilavian, liberal studies

Al & Isabelle Kabrielian Scholarship

Lauren Chardukian, biology

Charlie Keyan Scholarship

Emily Beberian, liberal studies; Tatevik Hovhannisyan, Commercial Recreation & Event Planning; Vartanush Mesropyan, psychology

Thomas A. Kooyumjian Family Foundation Scholarship

Noelle Joy, business; Marina Minas, mass communication and journalism; Alexa Ude, business

Yervant, Rose, & Hovannes Levonian Scholarship

Kevork Ajamian, history; Rachel Dadian, pre-business; Mario Garcia, business; Daniel Hairabedian, mechanical engineering; Lauren Hoekstra, kinesiology; Nishan Karagozian, mass communication and journalism; Katlin Kaundart, psychology; Alek Khatchigian, pre-business; Asatur Manavazian, mass communication and journalism; Zhora Pogosyan, biology; Michael John Rettig, history; Marine Vardanyan, health science

John and Lucille Melkonian Scholarship

Lauren Sarabian, business administration

Koren & Alice Odian Kasparian Scholarship

Phillip Der Mugrdechian, history

Charles K. & Pansy Pategian Zlokovich Scholarship

Breanna Aivazian, liberal studies; Joseph Bohigian, music; Arevik Chaglasyan, mass communication and journalism; Andrew Esguerra, business administration; Margaret Srmayan, art; Jayla Tunstall, mass communication and journalism

Leon S. Peters Scholarship

Rakel Hairabedian, civil engineering; Lilit Grigoryan, business administration; Gohar Krdanyan, business administration

Pete P. Peters Scholarship

Denise Altounian, political science; Armen Arikian, biology; Hagop Karakazian, math; Tamar Melkonian, biology; Suren Oganessian, creative writing; Mounah Saksouk, psychology

Telfeyan Evangelical Scholarship

Jessica Boujikian, political science

Harry & Mary Topoozian Merit Scholarship

Tamar Karkazian, business administration and sports marketing

Students in Elementary Armenian Class Enjoy Learning the Language and Culture



Armenian 1A class.

MARINE VARDANYAN
EDITOR

A classroom of students reciting the Armenian alphabet may not be an image that is very surprising, but in Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian’s elementary Armenian course, Armenia 1A, it is definitely an impressive sight.

What may also be a surprise are the number of non-Armenian students sitting side by side with Armenians and working together to learn elementary Armenian.

All of the students start off with limited or no knowledge of the Armenian language, but by the end of the semester, they will be able to read, write, and speak basic Armenian. The course, which counts towards an Armenian Studies minor, has given many students with an interest in the Armenian language

Photo: Marine Vardanyan

the opportunity to take the steps towards learning it.

Learning any new language may not be easy, but Professor Der Mugrdechian effectively teaches the students Armenian through visual aids, interactive conversations, and class assignments.

Prof. Der Mugrdechian encourages the students to feel confident in speaking the language and writing the letters. In class, new words are learned and repeated out loud several times to improve pronunciation. Students create sentences and stories with their new vocabulary and practice writing out the words on lined paper packets.

Though the Armenian language has its challenging aspects, such as its unique letters and sounds that are often foreign to English speakers, Prof. Der Mugrdechian

does not allow it to discourage the students. New class material is made relatable to the students, making it much easier for them to recall later. Prof. Der Mugrdechian often compares Armenian with English and Spanish to provide examples that make the process of learning a new language as comprehensible as possible.

“I have always wanted to learn Armenian and I want to be able to travel back to Armenia and be able to speak the language,” said junior Joey Bohigian, who visited Armenia two years ago on a summer musical program sponsored by the AGBU.

Art major Noemi Gutierrez commented on the similarities in pronunciation between Armenian and Spanish. Though the reading of the Armenian letters poses the most challenge, she hopes to one day use her basic knowledge of the Armenian language outside of class.

“I decided to take the class because I wanted to learn how to read and write the language,” said freshman Hovsep Nagapetian, “Even though we’ve only been in class for a few weeks it is a fun experience. Prof. Der Mugrdechian is a good teacher, and the other students are great to be around.”

Memorable tips, a lot of practice, and the use of outside sources recommended by the instructor are the best ways for students to become comfortable with speaking, reading, and writing the Armenian language.

Comedian Kev Orkian in Fresno



Photo: ASP Archive

L. to R. Hagop Ohanessian, Marine Vardanyan, Vartush Mesropyan, comedian Kev Orkian, Prof. La Porta, Prof. Der Mugrdechian, and Andrew Esguerra.

ANDREW ESGUERRA
STAFF WRITER

Friends and patrons of the Charlie Keyan Armenian Community School assembled at the Paul Shaghoian Performing Arts Center located on the Clovis North Educational Center campus for an evening of side-splitting comedy this past September 7th.

The Fresno audience was treated to a light mezza, a throwback performance to the fabulous ‘50s by none other than Martin “Elvis” Viramontes, and an evening of entertainment by international comedy and musical sensation Kevork Kapikyan. Better known by his stage name, Kev Orkian, the classically trained pianist delighted the audience with not only his musical ability, but also his Armenian-punchline-infused stand up comedy act.

Kev, an Armenian heralding from his native Great Britain, has made a name for himself entertaining audiences all around the globe, including performing in New York, Australia, Dubai and even for members of the British royal family.

This performance was Kev’s first time in the Fresno area, and was also the first stop on his tour of the United States for the fall.

Organizer Ron Mortanian, a local educator, garnered interest in inviting Kev to perform after hearing praise for the entertainer’s comedic genius from attendees of an Armenian cruise where Kev had performed.

According to Mortanian, the comedian was pleased to make Fresno his first stop in order to benefit “Reach for the Stars,” a program Mortanian created and developed where special

education students practice their language arts skills by composing letters to celebrities inviting them to come to Fresno.

Even though I volunteered at the show, I originally had not heard of Kev. But after attending the packed show, I would truly recommend that comedy lovers, Armenian and non-Armenian alike, should go see Kev perform.

The show was a mix of English puns and Armenian one-liners, much of based on Kev’s own Armenian family, that made the crowd roar with laughter.

Personally entertaining was the delayed chuckles of the non-Armenian speakers to get the punch-line translated in whispers from those that understood.

The show consisted of a medley of classical music—at one point Kev was playing music from Beethoven, Mozart, and from the play Carmen, all requests from the audience.

Hye Sharzhoom editor Marine Vardanyan even had an “African love song” dedicated to her, another example of Kev’s frequent audience participation, which she refers to as the “most special moment of the evening,” with a laugh.

Kev’s hilarious act is a show that is entertaining for all ages and cultures, but his best bits made light of growing up Armenian, which was a real treat for the attendees I spoke to after the event.

After hearing people say that they would pay a hundred dollars to see him again, I would definitely say that the British comedian is a crowd pleaser, whom I too hope to see perform again.

Dr. Sona Haroutyunian’s Literature and Translation Class Leaves Lasting Impression on Students

MARINE VARDANYAN
EDITOR

The echoes of our ancestors hold invaluable stories. This realization dawned on the students taking a Spring 2013 course, Armenian Studies 120T “Armenian Genocide Through Literature and Translation,” when a simple assignment to prepare a family tree lead to an overwhelming awakening of curiosity.

Dr. Sona Haroutyunian (University of Ca’ Foscari, Venice), Kazan Visiting Professor in Armenian Studies at Fresno State for the semester, went beyond simply teaching her lesson, to giving her students a means by which they could form a personal connection to their ancestors and to the topic of the course. Suddenly, stirring inside the students was a desire to uncover the past, to question and to engage family members, and to commence a comprehensive investigation into the history of their family.

Every family has a story, a tale of survival, of adversity, and of fortune. Throughout the course of the semester, Dr. Haroutyunian conveyed the significance of memory and transgenerational interpretation and preservation. Students developed a broader understanding of the Armenian



Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

Dr. Sona Haroutyunian, center, with students.

Genocide and presented it in the form of a memoir—a product of their various assignments and family explorations.

Students discussed an interpretation of their own family history with a personal memoir about an ancestor. This was not simply an assignment for a grade, but an eye-opening activity that brought each student closer to their predecessors and formed a relationship where previously none had existed. Each student presented a memoir that conveyed the great effort and energy invested to create a connection to their ancestors and pass on their stories. Soon enough, the project evolved from being a classroom assignment to a personal journey of discovering ones roots and appreciating the lives of

generations passed. The writings were presented with pride, with each student understanding their role of helping to eternalize the memories and stories of their ancestors.

In a previous edition of *Hye Sharzhoom*, readers learned about the students’ writing progress and experience in working on the project. Though Dr. Haroutyunian returned to Venice to continue her teaching of Armenian language and literature, she continued working on the project with her students at Fresno State. Now, the *Hye Sharzhoom* audience has the opportunity to read the end-result and appreciate the effort and research placed into the creation of their final outcomes.

Following are excerpts from four student class memoirs.

Class Memoirs



Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

Aram Hajian

My parents wanted their children to be raised with a love for their culture and ethnicity. I remember when I was growing

up that if I spoke English with my siblings I would be punished by having to stand in a corner with one leg and one arm up in the air and I would also have to recite the Armenian alphabet. Sometimes if my dad was really upset with us he would make us write out what we said in English in Armenian until a whole page was filled up.

Although these punishments seem a little severe for a four-year old, I can still speak and write Armenian to this day. Another thing my father did that followed in our ancestor’s footsteps was that he bought a farm in Sanger when I was around eight years

“The Don Juans in Marseilles” Comedic Play at Fresno State



Lala Mnatsakanyan, Ruzan Orkusyan, Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Tatevik Hovhannisyan, Narek Duryan, Vartush Mesropyan, Karo Kirakosian, Zhor Pogosyan, Harutyun Avalyan, Hrant Tokhatyan, Marine Vardanyan, Stella Zeynalyan and Shushan Sahakyan.

MARINE VARDANYAN
EDITOR

Fresno-Armenians enjoyed an afternoon of laughter on Sunday, April 7, when a comic play “The Don Juans in Marseilles,” sequel to the original “Don Juan Avia,” made its return to Fresno State’s Satellite Student Union. The Armenian Studies Program and the Charlie Keyan Armenian Community School co-sponsored the event, with help from the Armenian Students Organization. Garbis Titizian of Levon Travel was the organizer of the play’s international tour.

Comedians Hrant Tokhatyan, Narek Duryan, and Lala Mnatsakanyan, along with rising-stars Harut Avalyan, Stella Zeynalyan, and Shushanik Sahakyan brought an evening of hilarity to the audience, who watched the love scandals of the main characters unfold. Artash, played by Hrant Tokhatyan, is a gynecologist living with his police-officer girlfriend, Bertha, in Marseilles, France. When Bertha plans to visit her sick mother in Germany, Artash sees it as a chance to invite his lover Suzy, an opera singer, to his house.

Bertha nearly discovers Artash’s affair, who in order to cover up his plan, fabricates that his good friend Gilbert, an anesthesiologist from Paris, will be paying him a visit. Unbeknown to him, Gilbert is Bertha’s secret lover.

A confusion of identities, cleverly fabricated excuses, and chaos among lovers and friends became the source of entertainment for the evening. The show also included random appearances of a bewildered homeless man named Khachik, whose character was helped made believable by the performance of the ASO volunteers, who became part of the show.

“My favorite part of the play was the interaction of the ‘homeless man’ with the ASO volunteers,” said Ruzan Orkusyan.

As the show neared its end, the audience came to the realization that the homeless man was in fact an actor playing the role of Suzy’s ex-boyfriend, who journeyed from Armenia to wish her a happy birthday.

Laughter frequently erupted in the hall, as the audience witnessed the misfortunes and the hopeless attempts to avoid the inescapable

KARKAZIAN, FROM PAGE 1

an emphasis in sports marketing with a 3.83 GPA. Throughout her four years at Fresno State, she was testament to what it means to have a rewarding and satisfying college experience.

Never one to shy away from opportunity, Karkazian truly made the most of her college experience.

The award was the culmination of hard work and dedication that exemplified her collegiate career.

“It was such an honor to receive the award and it showed me that all the things I was doing really did make a difference,” said Karkazian.

During her first year of college, she made the decision to get involved and find a way to impact the campus. “The more I got involved, the more I saw how it impacted the students and their experience,” said Karkazian, and from there her involvement grew.

She was a coordinator, assistant director, and eventually

director of USU Productions, Fresno State’s programming board. She was also a part of the Craig School of Business’ highly selective honors program.

Karkazian was one of the founding members and president of the American Marketing Association, Collegiate Chapter. Apart from her involvement in various organizations on campus, Karkazian always made it a point to stay involved with the Armenian community.

“I didn’t want to forget my roots; it’s always been important to me to stay involved with my culture,” affirmed Karkazian.

Her consistent presence in the Fresno Armenian community included three years as editor of *Hye Sharzhoom*, a term as President of the Armenian Students Organization, and various roles within Fresno’s Homenetmen, Sassoon chapter.

“It was my initial involvement in ASO and *Hye Sharzhoom* that motivated me to get even more involved,” said Karkazian.



Danielle Tanielian
Freshman
Major: Biomedical Physics

It is important that we can say we are an independent nation. Independent Armenia signifies a group of thriving and surviving Armenians who refuse to give in to anyone’s commands any longer. Personally, I am filled with pride knowing that Armenia is an independent, significant nation, composed of people who continue to leave a forever-growing mark on the world.



Noyeme Kazaryan
Freshman
Major: Chemistry

surfacing of the truth. The great confusion, complications, and the consequences still did not teach the two Don Juans a lesson, as the stars promised to return to Fresno when the third sequel of their adventures makes its debut. The cast of “The Don Juans in Marseilles” left Fresno for their next appearance in Canada, the final destination of their North American tour.

Because of her extensive involvement in Student Affairs, Karkazian now envisions herself working on a college campus either in Sports Marketing or Student Affairs. She hopes to be able to impact students in the same way she was influenced and supported by her advisors and professors during her undergraduate career.

After four years of hectic days and sleepless nights, she is currently taking advantage of her free time to travel and experience the world. Last summer Karkazian traveled to Yerevan, Armenia to take part in the Pan-Homenetmen Games and is set to travel to Costa Rica in the coming weeks.

Reflecting on the memories past four years she stated, “I really enjoyed my time at Fresno State, especially being able to take what I learned in the classroom and applying it to my extra-curricular activities.”

For now, Karkazian is eager to see where the future takes her and looks forward to the experiences which are sure to follow.

Eench Ga Chga

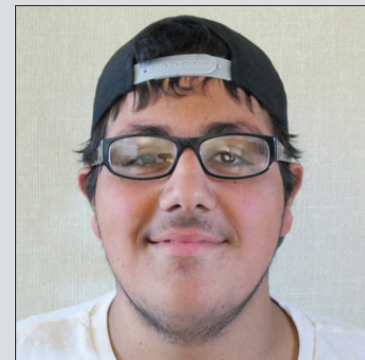
TATEVIK HOVHANNISYAN • *STAFF WRITER*

What is the importance of an independent Republic of Armenia?

Armenia, given the chance to be an independent nation, is a huge stepping stone on the road to recovery and success.

We were allowed the long awaited opportunity to create our own culture and diplomatic relations without the pressure of a power hungry Soviet supervisor. Nonetheless, we paid a high price for our independence. September 21 marks a day on the calendar where we finally took the initiative to shine above the rest.

it allowed the Armenian culture to flourish even more, and this is the importance of an Independent Armenia.



Hovsep Nagapetian
Freshman
Major: Biology
Minor: Armenian Studies

The independence of Armenia is important because it shows that through all the struggles thrust upon us, we rose above what was expected and established a long and lasting freedom in which we are no longer oppressed or controlled.

As a young Armenian I am proud to say that my people are free and have the choice to do what suits them best, as opposed to an established regime in which there is no free thinking and every aspect of life is controlled. Now if only we could get the issue of the Genocide resolved. That would complete everything.

Photos: Barlow Der Mugrdechian



Haverj Stanboulian
Freshman
Major: Biology

Every individual defines freedom in a different way. Armenians were under Soviet rule for a long time and once we got our independence, we were free, independent.

Mothers were able to teach their children the Armenian alphabet freely, authors had more freedom in writing. When Armenia declared independence from the Soviets on September 21, 1991,

HAYASHEN, FROM PAGE 2

Professor Der Mugrdechian, a native of Fresno, initially gave an overview of Armenian emigration to the United States and later focused on the Armenians who settled in the San Joaquin Valley, where from humble beginnings, during which time they were discriminated against, they gradually integrated and prospered.

The first Armenians to move to Fresno were the brothers Hagop, Garabed, and Simon Seropian, who arrived in 1881. Their letters to their home village of Marsovan in the Ottoman Empire brought more immigrants to the San Joaquin Valley, which reminded them so much of home.

By 1894 the Armenian population in Fresno was 360, a number that grew rapidly with the onset of the Hamidian Massacres in 1895-96. Many of the immigrants were Protestant converts; the result of heavy missionary activity in Armenia by American Christians seeking converts from the Armenian Church.

During and after the Genocide even more Armenians came until the restrictions on immigration in 1921 and 1924 brought this to a virtual end.

The early immigrants were primarily involved with farming and agriculture, with the ultimate goal almost always that of land ownership. By 1930 Armenians

owned 40% of the raisin acreage in Fresno County. Armenians were also pioneers in the melon and fig production in the region.

From the very beginning, bigotry against Armenians was common, and led many to Anglicize their names. In the 1890s Armenian Protestants were stripped of membership in local churches.

Fear of Armenian land ownership caused the passage of laws restricting their rights to freely buy land. This attitude towards the tight knit Armenian community led some to try to assimilate, while having the opposite effect on others.

The problem lasted for many decades, finally abating in the 1950s.

Some of the most famous American Armenians originated from the region such as William Saroyan, Cher, Kirk Kerkorian, Monte Melkonian and others.

In 1908, *Asbarez* (meaning Arena) Armenian newspaper was first published in Fresno.

The lecture was organized jointly by CAIA and the Gomidas Institute.

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MEMOIRS, FROM PAGE 5

old. After writing this paper and thinking back about all the work and sweat I put in on that farm, I can’t help but compare myself to my 11 year-old great grandfather who was also raised on farmland in Yoghoun Olouk in the Mousa Ler region, but also went through a Genocide at that young age.

I remember how I would complain to my dad and ask why we couldn’t live in the city, and he would tell me about my ancestry and how we still own land in Yoghoun Olouk. I am glad I was raised on a farm because I never realized how much I had in common with my great grandfather until now. I thank my dad for all the things he went through to help me maintain my culture and I also thank him for infusing my Armenian identity in me at a young age.



Michael Rettig

My great grandpa Vahe Haig pulled out his *kanon* and began to play a few songs. His concentration was broken when he heard a *tap tap tap* at the door. He opened it to find a pair of Turkish soldiers standing on his porch. “Whose music is it that we hear from this house?” asked the soldiers. “That was my *kanon* playing.” At these words the soldiers grabbed Vahe and took him to their headquarters along

with his *kanon*. He was forced to spend the night there. As the sun rose the next morning, Vahe was woken by the soldiers and dragged to the prison. Vahe heard Armenian men being dragged into cells and saw a few of them pass his, mostly intellectuals. The guards finally came for him and opened the gate to his cell. They dragged him out into the night along with the *kanon* and set him up outside the prison.

Vahe noticed that there were several other Turkish and Armenian musicians surrounding the jail. “Play!” the guard ordered them. The confused and tired musicians stared back at the guard in confusion. Vahe became carried away in his music when he began hearing screams shrieking from the prison. “Louder!” the guard yelled. The musicians cast weary glances at each other and Vahe began to realize their purpose. They were being used to cover the screams of the tortured prisoners so that the Turkish civilians nearby would not be bothered. Vahe stopped playing and began to vomit. The guards ignored him. The next few nights were much the same. On the third day, an American missionary who ran one of the hospitals came and after much arguing, was able to convince the Turkish guards that they needed help to run the hospital. The guards let Vahe go to volunteer at the hospital, but promised that they would come for him. That night, Vahe was awoken by one of the missionaries, who led him out the back door...

PRESIDENT CASTRO, FROM PAGE 1

achievements of the Program over the past forty years, with emphasis on the teaching and scholarship conducted by faculty and in the student involvement. The Program is distinctive in its outreach efforts, with a highly successful Lecture Series, which draws support from students, faculty, and the community.

Dr. Joseph I. Castro, the eighth president of Fresno State, began his tenure on August 1, 2013, succeeding Dr. John Welty. Dr. Castro is the former vice chancellor, student academic affairs of the University of California, San Francisco.

“It is incredibly humbling that the CSU Trustees appointed me as the president of Fresno State and I truly appreciate this honor,” said Castro. “Dr. Welty was successful in leading Fresno State over 22 years. I look forward to working alongside the faculty, staff and students at the university and with alumni and friends throughout the Central Valley and beyond to build on this strong foundation to guide Fresno State to new heights of success.”

Castro joined Fresno State after holding several leadership positions at University of California campuses, most recently serving as vice chancellor, student academic affairs at UC San Francisco since 2010.

Prior to his appointment as vice chancellor, Castro served as vice provost (2008-10), associate vice chancellor for student academic



Lilia Gasparyan

My great grandfather Harutyun Boyajyan was born in 1889 in a village called Tire. At the age of 24 he married my great grandmother Sima whom he knew since his childhood. Harutyun was a very wealthy man in Turkey, people called him Artin Agha. He had vegetable plantations and owned lots of land and a beautiful home. My great grandparents had six children together.

Although the Genocide affected my great grandparents, they continued to live in Turkey. After a while they decided to move to Armenia. Artin left everything behind because he was planning on going back and forth from Armenia to Turkey, little did he know that he was going to lose everything he had...



Alikzandria Pilavian

Garabed and Eskouhie lived three doors down from each other in Lebanon. She was 19 years old

affairs (2006-08) and as interim graduate dean at UCSF from October 2011 to March 2012. He was the recipient of the 2010 Martin Luther King Jr. Award at UCSF and the 2010 University of California Student Association’s Administrator of the Year Award.

During his 23-year career, Castro served in leadership positions within the UC system at the Berkeley, Davis, Merced, and Santa Barbara campuses and

OSHER INSTITUTE, FROM PAGE 3
job at organizing the four lectures, each fully illustrated with power-point slides, into a coherent overview of Armenian history.

Professor Der Mugerdechian’s first lecture about ancient Armenia began by introducing the kingdom of Urartu, which was the first Armenian kingdom that flourished during the 9th-6th century BC. He also made sure to include various interesting facts about the culture, such as how the word “Armenian” was first used in an inscription by King Darius the Great of Persia in 520 BC.

Professor Der Mugerdechian also enlightened the audience about the major events in Armenian history; these included the Christianization of Armenia in 301 AD, and the development of the Armenian alphabet by Saint Mesrop Mashtots in 406 AD. Apart from teaching the

when they married. When she had her first child, Garabed was upset because he wanted to have a boy. Her second child was another girl. Garabed then took off to Syria for one week and didn’t come home because he was so upset it wasn’t a boy!

My great grandpa Garabed Atikian was born around 1904. His father was a lawyer and his uncle fought in General Antranig’s army.

I never really knew the details about how my family began or how much they sacrificed to live a better life. I used to get angry with my family when they wouldn’t tell me things that I wanted to know from their past experiences. The phrase that the Armenians use to say and what I’ve grown up listening to all my life is “Guh medznas, guh mornas,” which means that as you grow older, you will forget. The best part about this statement is that the older I get, the more I disagree with that statement.

What I came to realize is that when people don’t speak of something tragic that has happened in their life, it actually eats at them more. The reason they feel that it’s better to keep quiet is so that they don’t disrupt the peace in their life that they finally have now. For example, in my grandma’s mind, the best thing for her to do is to stay home and not speak, when in reality, it actually makes things worse.

Living a life of guilt is not an easy thing to deal with, and because of my grandmother’s traumatic experiences, having to flee from city to city, and having nothing, she needed to fix what she knows people right now in Armenia are going through. So she decided to help those in need in Armenia by distributing her clothing.

at the Office of the President. Castro earned a bachelor’s degree in political science and master’s degree in public policy from the University of California, Berkeley and a doctorate in higher education policy and leadership from Stanford University.

A native of Hanford, Castro is the first member of his family to attend college. He and his wife Mary, who is also a Valley native, have three children.

history of the Armenians, Prof. Der Mugerdechian also presented interesting aspects of the Armenian culture. For example, he discussed the Armenian language, and how it belonged to the Indo-European family. The Armenian language is most closely related to the Greek and Persian languages in terms of vocabulary, morphology, syntax, and phonology. The first lecture was very informative on the early history of the Armenian people and their culture.

The second lecture, “From Armenia to California,” focused on the immigration of Armenians to the United States in the years 1834-1914. There were three periods of major immigration, “Origins” (1834-1890), “Flight” (1891-1898), and “Mass Migration” (1899-1914). Prof. Der Mugerdechian gave an in-depth

DAVID OF SASSOUN,
FROM PAGE 1

publication of the epic poem, which had survived until the 1970s orally, passed on, generation after generation, for more than a thousand years by anonymous village bards.

The Symposium was planned to coincide with the world premier of a new opera by one of America’s most well known and liked composers, Earl Robinson, best known for his cantata *Ballad for Americans* made famous by Paul Robeson in 1939, and such songs as “Joe Hill,” “The House I Live In,” and a number of Hollywood film scores.

Robinson’s opera, “David of Sassoun,” was inspired in the early 1970s when he was in Fresno on a visit from his home in Santa Barbara. He was struck by the power of the enormous bronze equestrian statue of David of Sassoun in Courthouse Park in downtown Fresno. He located the artist, Varaz Samuelian (1917-1995), a close friend of William Saroyan and a native of Erevan, Armenia, who after the Second World War worked in the atelier of Fernand Léger in Paris, before finally settling in Fresno.

Samuelian carefully explained the history of the statue and the heroic details of the saga of Sassoun. Robinson was intrigued. After careful research, he spent several years writing the opera. Its premier was scheduled at California State University, Fresno, while Robinson was on campus as composer in residence. In the original working scenario, the opera is subtitled “A Folk Opera, a Musical Legend, a Pageant, a Fairytale...,” and is divided into three acts each with twelve scenes. The World Premier was director by Professor Ed EmanuEl of the Fresno State Theatre Arts Department and held in the University Theatre the night before the Symposium.

Every serious scholar from Armenia, France, England, Canada, and the United States who had published on the Armenian epic was invited to participate in the International Symposium entitled “David of Sassoun: The Armenian Folk Epic after a

Century.” The all day Symposium took place in the vast main floor of the old Student Union to an overflow crowd. In addition to the papers of the conference, the current volume contains an introduction outlining the history of the epic as well as a concise summary of all the episodes of the official version established by a team of scholars in Erevan in 1939. The essays are as fresh today as they were when they were written despite the decades, which have passed.

Also included at the beginning of the volume is a new variant, the only known version of the epic recorded anywhere in the Diaspora. Because of the publicity generated by the Symposium, Lilyan Chooljian of Fresno, present at the conference, who had recorded a recitation of the variant some years earlier, brought it to the attention of Dr. Kouymjian.

Thanks to a generous grant from the Dolores Zohrab Liebmann Fund and the M. Victoria Karagozian Kazan and Henry S. Khanzadian Kazan Fund, and the efforts of Professor Der Mugrdechian to include the volume in the Armenian Series of monographs the Program sponsors, the book is now available to the general public.

The critical brilliance of many of the essays, at times challenging traditional views held on the epic and how it should be presented and understood, will provide much source material for scholars.

David of Sassoun: Critical Studies on the Armenian Epic is available from The Press at California State University, Fresno through its website <http://shop.thepressatsufresno.com/>, by post at The Press at California State University, Fresno, 2380 East Keats Avenue M/S MB 99, Fresno, CA 93740-8024, or by calling 559-278-3056.

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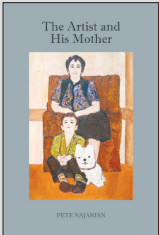
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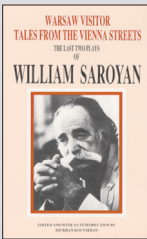
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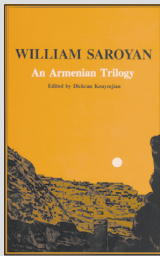
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Warsaw Visitor

An Armenian Trilogy



OSHER INSTITUTE, FROM PAGE 7
review, explaining what occurred during each of these periods and the causes for the immigration to the United States. By the end of this presentation, the Osher Institute participants learned that there were about 70,000 first generation Armenians living in the United States by 1914. This lecture served as a foundation for the upcoming lecture on the Genocide.

The Armenian Genocide that began in 1915 was the topic of the third lecture in the series. Prof. Der Mugrdechian provided a very detailed and graphic presentation on the Armenian Genocide, and the Osher participants were very attentive throughout. Der Mugrdechian covered the historical aspects of the Genocide, and also discussed the policy of denial by the modern Turkish Republic. He emphasized the impact of the Genocide on Armenian culture.

Finally, Professor Der Mugrdechian concluded the series by speaking on “Armenia Today.” He explained how the modern republic of Armenia was established on September 21, 1991 and informed the audience

on the accomplishments of the Armenian people in education, in cultural life, and in the modernization of their capital. He also discussed politics in Armenia and the economy. Throughout the presentation he displayed a variety of photographs of present day Armenia, and many

of the beautiful churches and monuments.

The Osher Institute participants enjoyed and appreciated this four-part series, and commented that they had not seen such detailed and substantial presentations, as those given by Professor Der Mugrdechian.

Fifteenth Annual Armenian Film Festival

Sponsored by the Armenian Students Organization and Armenian Studies Program

First Call for Entries
Entries are being sought for the Annual Armenian Film Festival. Films made by Armenian directors/writers, or films with an

Armenian theme are sought. Films may be in any language (with English subtitles). Film must be DVD (NTSC).

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